

REMARKS

Claims 48-50, 53, 56-58, 60-64, 68 and 69 are pending in the application.

I. Applicant appreciates the courtesy of the Interview with the Examiner conducted on March 28, 2002. In conformity therewith, new claims have been filed. In particular, claim 68 (replacing claim 47) has been worded with process features as discussed in the interview, claims have been worded as use claims with corrected claim 61 as discussed in the interview. ?

In case it is deemed to be necessary in new claim 68 in line 5 after "hydrophilic groups" the phrase could be added "which organic component forms an azeotrope with water and".

Furthermore, the last feature of claim 68 could be amended by adding the wording "in an initial cleaning step".

II. Teaching of the closest prior art document (WO 96/28535)

According to its claim 1 WO96/28535 teaches a process for cleaning an article comprising the steps of:

1. Contacting the article (s) with a cleaning agent containing, based on the total weight of (a) and (b),

(a) from 0.01 – 80 weight % of water, and

(b) from 99.99 – 20 weight % of an organic solvent having features of:

(i) forming an azeotrope with water, and

(ii) forming a separate phase after azeotropic distillation,

2. Rinsing said article (s) with a rinsing agent containing from 99.99 - 60 weight % of water and from 0.01 – 40 weight % of said organic solvent, based on the total weight of a rinsing agent, whereby the water contained in the rinsing agent is higher than the water content in the cleaning agent.

3. Combining at least a portion of cleaning agent used in step 1 and at least a portion of the rinsing agent used in step 2 and subjecting the combined liquid to an azeotropic distillation, separating the azeotrope into a water-rich phase and a solvent-rich phase, recycling at least a portion of the solvent-rich phase to step 1 and recycling at least a portion of the water-rich phase to step 2.

As stated on page 3, lines 6 – 11, the percentage of water in the cleaning agent may be higher than its solubility in the organic solvent at the given cleaning temperature. In this case the cleaning agent is an emulsion. This means that the cleaning agent is basically the organic solvent with some water dissolved in the organic solvent up to a concentration where the cleaning agent forms an emulsion of water

droplets in a continuous organic phase.

In contrast, the rinsing agent according to page 16, lines 7 to 9, basically consists of water with some organic solvent added to water up to a concentration at which the percentage of the organic solvent in the rinsing agent is higher than its solubility in water; in this case the rinsing agent is an emulsion.

According to the most preferred examples in example 1 the cleaning agent contains about 12% of water in an organic component (propyleneglycol mono n-butyl ether) (page 19, lines 22, 23). The rinsing agent comprises 4.6 weight % of the same organic component in water (page 19, lines 23, 24). The cleaning agent and the rinsing agent of this preferred example are clear liquids and form no emulsions.

Similarly, in example 2 the cleaning agent comprises 1% of water in organic solvent, the rinsing agent comprises 4% organic solvent in water, wherein both agents form clear liquids at the cleaning temperature.

Summary:

WO 96/28535 teaches the cleaning of an article in a liquid cleaning composition consisting almost only of an organic component with molecules having lipophilic and hydrophilic groups and with some water added to the organic component. The cleaning

is followed by a rinsing step with rinsing agent consisting of water with an organic component added to the water, preferably in an amount being completely soluble in water. Cleaning is clearly defined by dissolving dirt sticking to the surface of the article to be cleaned in said liquid cleaning composition. Rinsing is clearly defined by removing residues of said cleaning composition (possibly with some dirt dissolved therein) from the cleaned surface.

The basic teaching of WO 96/28535 thus corresponds to the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, i.e. to clean with an agent consisting mainly of an organic solvent and after the cleaning to rinse with an agent consisting mainly of water and including some organic solvent in a low concentration. The purpose of the rinsing step is to remove the cleaning agent used in the previous cleaning step to a sufficient degree (see page 16, line 37 to page 17, line 4).

There is no hint in WO 96/28535 that it would be advantageous in any respect to use an emulsion instead of a clear cleaning or rinsing agent.

III. Teaching of the present invention (proposed new claims 68 and 69)

In distinct contrast to the teaching of WO 96/28535, the present invention teaches the cleaning of an article, i.e. the removal of dirt sticking to the surface of said article, by providing a liquid cleaning composition which basically (with a high

concentration of water and low concentration of organic solvent) corresponds to the rinsing agent of WO 96/28535 but which contains the organic component in a concentration greater than its solubility in water at the cleaning temperature, so that the liquid cleaning composition forms an emulsion of droplets of the organic phase in a continuous aqueous phase when being agitated at said cleaning temperature. Without agitating (as required by the new claims) the liquid cleaning composition would, at the cleaning temperature, form two separate phases with normally the organic phase (small volume) above the aqueous phase (big volume). Such a two-phase composition would not clean.

There is no hint anywhere in the prior art that such liquid cleaning composition being maintained in a status of an emulsion of droplets of the organic phase in a continuous aqueous phase has an excellent cleaning performance despite its low content of the organic component. This excellent cleaning behavior, which is surprising and unexpected for one skilled in the art, can be seen from appendix 1, which shows graphs representing the cleaning efficiency versus concentration of the organic component in water. The graph with round dots exhibits the cleaning efficiency for SMT Adhesives, i.e. adhesives as used in Surface Mounting Technology with electronic boards, and the graph with rectangular dots exhibits the cleaning efficiency for ionic contamination. As can be clearly seen from appendix 1 of the miscibility gap (limit of the solubility of the organic component in water) the cleaning performance for SMT Adhesives (organic dirt) suddenly steeply increases up to a value near the cleaning

performance of the pure organic component (100% solvent ratio), whereas the cleaning efficiency for inorganic dirt (ionic contaminations) stays high up to 20% solvent ratio, i.e. with the liquid cleaning composition being in the status of an emulsion (cloudy) when being agitated. Therefore, with the inventive method, despite the low concentration of organic component, there is achieved a very good cleaning performance for a very broad scale of contamination. This seems to be achieved by the droplets of the organic composition, which act during the mechanic agitation when contacting the dirt or contamination sticking to the surface of the article to be cleaned as a pure organic component (100%) which dissolves the contamination within the organic droplet, and seem to further act by the mechanical effect of a surface or the mass of the droplet.

IV. Novelty and inventiveness of subject matter of new claims 68 and 69:

As has been pointed out in detail the inventive method is in distinct contrast to the prior art method. The prior art discloses to clean an article (dissolve dirt) with a liquid cleaning composition having a high concentration of an organic component and a low concentration of water, which liquid cleaning composition preferably forms a clear liquid with the water completely dissolved in the organic component. After the cleaning step a rinsing step has to be performed with a rinsing liquid consisting mainly of water with some organic component dissolved in the water so as to preferably form a clear liquid, said rinsing step having the purpose to remove residue of the organic component of the cleaning liquid (perhaps with some dirt dissolved in the organic component) from the

surface of the articles to be cleaned. In contrast, the invention teaches cleaning articles with a cleaning liquid containing a low concentration of an organic component in a high concentration of water, the concentration of organic component being such that it is higher than the solubility of the organic component in water, so that said liquid cleaning composition forms an emulsion of organic droplets in a continuous water phase when being agitated.

Referring to the remarks of the Examiner that there is no difference between cleaning and rinsing, applicant respectfully disagrees with this assessment. Not only the language per se makes a clear difference but also the closest prior art document, namely WO 96/28535, clarifies this difference. To clean an article means to remove dirt, preferably solid dirt, sticking onto the surface of the article by dissolving said dirt in the cleaning liquid. To rinse means to wash out any residues of the cleaning liquid adhering to the surface of the cleaned article, and occasionally including some dirt dissolved in the cleaning liquid, by a rinsing liquid, which leaves no more visible residues at the surface of the cleaned and rinsed article. A big advantage of the invention is not only that it uses only a low concentration of an organic component despite of a very thorough cleaning performance for a broad range of soils, but in addition that normally it necessitates no extra rinsing step with an extra rinsing liquid, since the inventive cleaning liquid is as diluted as a conventional rinsing liquid. There is no hint in the prior art for the very good cleaning behavior of the inventive liquids when being maintained in a status of an emulsion of organic droplets in a continuous aqueous phase by agitating.

V. Referring to the argument of the Examiner that an independent method claim as broad as claim 68 would unduly inhibit a skilled person from performing the invention, the following is stated:

Appendix 2 lists some sources for physical data concerning water miscibility of organic compounds, which are available to any skilled person. As obvious from appendix 3, which is a sample of a typical table as given in any of the documents of appendix 2, there is a column showing the solubility of the organic compound in water (w). A miscibility gap exists for such components, which are characterized in the gap of the solubility in water by δ .

Therefore, there is no problem for one of ordinary skill in the art to perform the invention as characterized in the claims.

VI. Summary:

It is respectfully requested that a patent with the claims as now on file, since the subject-matter of the new claims is novel and non-obvious versus the prior art and gives a clear teaching which can be performed by one of ordinary skill in the art.

In light of the foregoing amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that this

application now stands in condition for allowance. Action to this end is courteously solicited. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned hereby respectfully requests an interview in order to discuss appropriate claim language that will place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE:**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 51, 52, 54, and 65 - 67, add the following new claims 68 and 69, and amend claims 48 - 50, 53, 56 - 58, 60 - 64 to read as follows:

68. A method of cleaning an article with an active liquid cleaning composition, including the steps of:

- a) providing a liquid cleaning composition comprising 65% - 99% by weight water and an organic component, and containing molecules having lipophilic and hydrophilic groups, wherein at a temperature at which cleaning takes place, said organic component is present in said water at a concentration greater than its solubility in said water, wherein at at least one of a different temperature and a different concentration, said organic component is completely soluble in said water so as to form an optically clear liquid;
- b) bringing said liquid cleaning composition to a temperature at which cleaning is to take place;
- c) agitating said liquid cleaning composition to form an emulsion that is in a status of an emulsion having droplets of an organic phase in a continuous aqueous phase; and
- d) bringing said liquid cleaning composition into contact with said article, while continuing to agitate said liquid cleaning composition to maintain said emulsion, so as to clean said article by dissolving dirt sticking to a surface of said article.

48. A method according to claim [47] 68, wherein said cleaning composition is brought into contact with an article at a cleaning temperature of from 40 to 60° C.
49. A method according to claim [47] 68, wherein the emulsion is maintained by agitation or by applying ultrasound.
50. A method according to claim [47] 68, wherein said organic component is such that said liquid cleaning composition has a constant boiling temperature or has a boiling temperature which changes so as to become constant during boiling of said cleaning composition to form an azeotrope, and which furthermore includes the steps of vaporizing said liquid cleaning composition, and of causing vapor from said liquid cleaning composition to condense on said article that is to be cleaned therewith.
53. A method according to claim [47] 68, wherein said organic component is completely dissolved in said water at a temperature that is lower than said temperature that prevails during a cleaning process.
69. The use of a liquid cleaning composition to clean an article, wherein said liquid cleaning composition comprises 65-99% by weight water and an organic component, and contains molecules having lipophilic and hydrophilic groups, wherein at a temperature at which cleaning takes place, said organic component is present in said water at a concentration greater than its solubility in said water, whereas at at least one of a different temperature and a different concentration, said organic component is completely soluble in said water so as to form an optically clear liquid, wherein said liquid cleaning composition is brought to a temperature at which cleaning is to take place, wherein said liquid cleaning composition is agitated to form an emulsion that is in

a status of an emulsion having droplets of an organic phase in a continuous aqueous phase, and wherein said liquid cleaning composition is brought into contact with an article that is to be cleaned, while said liquid cleaning composition continues to be agitated to maintain said emulsion, so as to clean said article by dissolving dirt sticking to a surface of said article.

56. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said organic component is completely dissolvable [dissolved] in said water at a temperature that is lower than said cleaning temperature.

57. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said water is present by at least 75% by weight.

58. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said water is present by at least 85% by weight.

60. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said organic component is such that said liquid cleaning composition is an azeotrope.

61. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said organic component is a solvent having the general formula:



where R^1 and R^3 are each independently selected from the group consisting of H, CH_3 , C_2H_5 , straight-chain or branched, saturated or unsaturated C_3 to C_{18} alkyl groups in which one or more nonadjacent $-CH_2-$ groups may be replaced by $-O-$,

? -NH- in which the hydrogen may be replaced by C_1 to C_8 alkyl groups, saturated or unsaturated cyclic C_3 to C_6 groups, in which one or more nondajacent $-CH_2-$ groups

may be replaced by -O-, -NH- in which the hydrogen may be replaced by C₁ to C₈ alkyl groups;

X is selected from the group consisting of -O-, -C(=O)-, -C(=O)-O-, -NH-, [-NR⁴- (where R⁴ is selected from the group consisting of H, CH₃, C₂H₅, and straight-chain or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₃ to C₁₅ alkyl groups),] -N(OH)-, straight-chain or branched C₂ [C₃] to C₈ alkylene groups in which one or more nonadjacent -CH₂- groups may be replaced by -O-;

and n represents whole integers.

62. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, which further includes at least one of the group consisting of a not spontaneously evaporating cleaning reinforcer and a corrosion protection additive [, which are distillable together with the liquid cleaning composition].

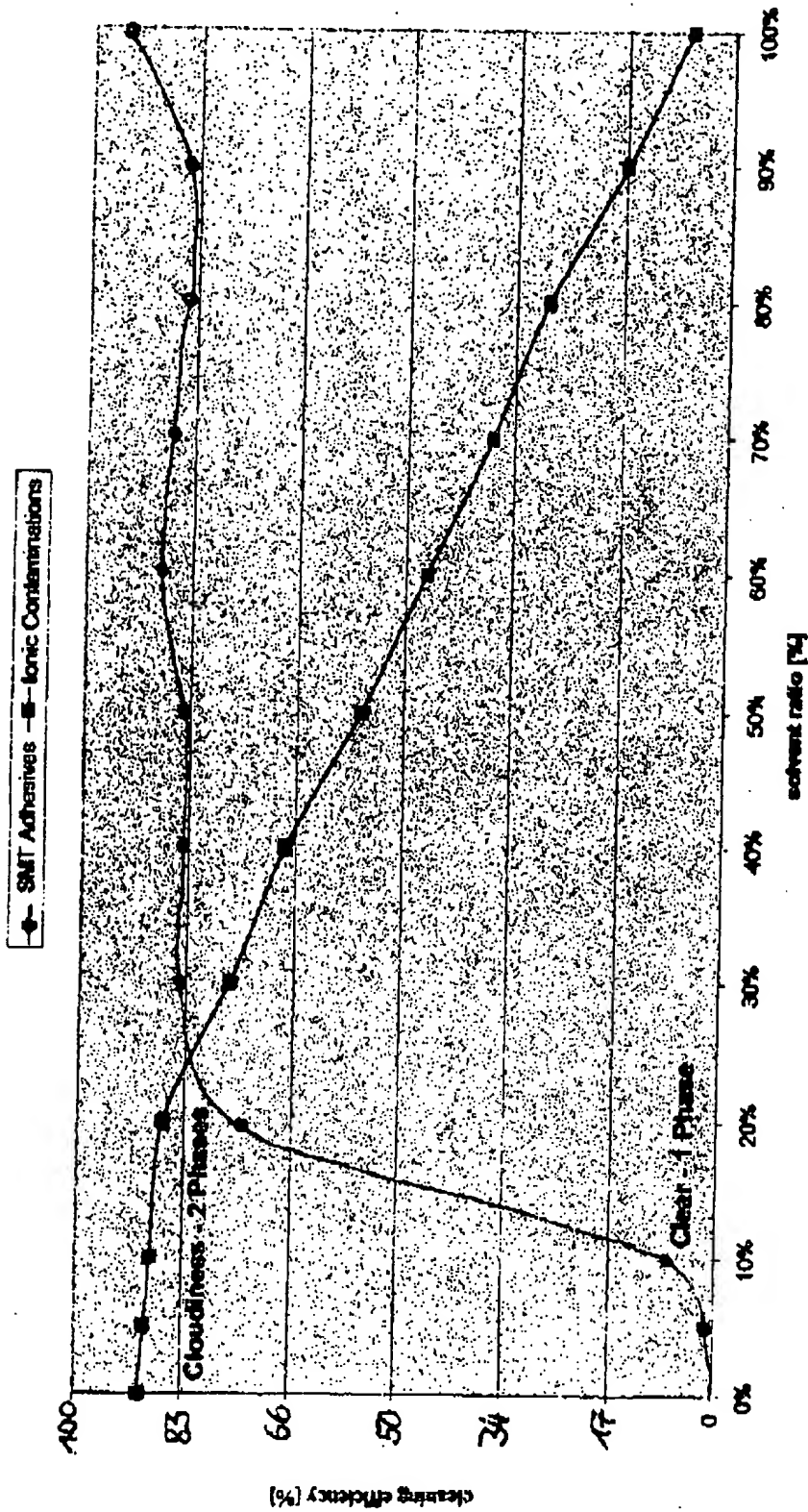
63. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim [54] 69, wherein said organic component comprises glycol ether.

64. [A] Use of a liquid cleaning composition according to claim 63, wherein said glycol ether is dipropyleneglycol mono-n-propyl ether.

Appendix 1

CLEANING EFFICIENCY

Removability of SMT Adhesives and Ionic Contaminations



Sources for physical data concerning water miscibility

Handbook of Chemistry and Physics: 54th Edition 1973-74, Ed. R. C. Weast.
published CRC Press, C 75 ff

<http://www.hbconetbase.com>

This 3rd electronic edition follows the 81st edition of the print Handbook (of Chemistry and Physics) in terms of content. There are several updated and expanded tables: Fundamental Physical Constants (the new set of CODATA recommended values, replacing the 1986 set); The Elements (descriptive texts on the occurrence, properties, history, and uses of all the chemical elements); Dissociation Constants of Organic Acids and Bases (expanded by 50%); Dipole Moments (revised and expanded); Threshold Limits for Airborne Contaminants (including the most recent recommendations).

Handbook of Physical Quantities. Grigor'ev, Igor S. and Melikhov, Evgenii Z. eds. Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1997. 1548p. ISBN: 0849328616. This reference provides information concerning the physical phenomena and properties of various media. Presents basic physical parameters and properties of various substances employed in modern science and industry. The material is subdivided into the following branches: mechanics, thermodynamics, transport phenomena, electricity and magnetism, optics and lasers, nuclear physics, astronomy, and geophysics. Numerical data presented in the form of figures and tables are supplemented with short introductory texts giving concise and comprehensive coverage of the subject.

International Critical Tables of Numerical Data, Physics, Chemistry and Technology. US National Research Council. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1928-30. 7v. Separately published Index, 1933. Out of Print. This classic was comprehensive at the time of publication. Still contains much useful information although out of print.

Materials and Technology: A Systematic Encyclopedia of the Technology of Materials Used in Industry and Commerce, Including Foodstuffs and Fuels. Codd, L. W. et al, eds. London: Longman, 1968-75. 8v. Comprehensive, if dated. Vol. 1: Air, water, inorganic chemicals and nucleonics. Vol. 2: Non-metallic ores, silicate industries and solid mineral fuels. Vol. 3: Metals and ores. Vol. 4: Petroleum and organic chemicals. Vol. 5: Natural organic materials and related synthetic products. Vol. 6: Wood, paper, textiles, plastics and photographic materials. Vol. 7: Vegetable food products and luxuries. Vol. 8: Edible oils and fats, animal food products. Material resources. General Index. Appendix.

CRC HANDBOOK OF TABLES FOR ORGANIC COMPOUND IDENTIFICATION, 3rd ed. Z. Rappoport, Chemical Rubber Co., 1967 SELREF/QD65.C4 suppl 1967 This handbook provides physical constants for many different organic compounds tabulated and organized by chemical groups such as alcohols, ketones, esters, and alkenes. Logarithmic tables, carbohydrate properties and other data are included along with an index for the organic compounds included in the tables. Properties: Physical; Spectral; Thermal; Materials: Organic chemical identifiers: Boiling point; Density; Dissociation constant; Freezing point; Infrared correlation; Melting point; Miscibility; Refractive index; Specific rotation

[illegible]

For explanations, symbols and abbreviations see beginning of table. For structural formulas see end of table.

C-78

Appendix 3
page 1

22 APR 2002 12:22

BLUMENBACH KRAMER & PARTNER SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS 3397

S. 10

(α)	specific rotation	fl	flakes	per	pericard
d	slightly	flr	fluorescent	perh	pericardium ether
>	above, more than	fr	freeson	pk	pink
<	below, less than	fr. p.	freesing point	ph	phenyl
sol	soluble in all proportions	flum	fuming	ph	phenyl
int	name approved by the International Union of Chemists (I.U.C.) ¹	gel	gelatinous	pi	pi
IR	IR, or UV, or NMR spectra	gl	glacial	pr	prisms
ref	referenced	glid	golden	Prak	J. Prakt. Chem.
unk	unknown	gr	green	purp	purple
na	nucleic acid	gran	granular	pw	powder
ab	abnormal	gr	gray	py	pyridine
ac	acid	h	h	pym	pyrazole
Ac	acetyl	H	Heb. Chim. Acta	pyr	pyrazole
acc	acetone	haz	heating	rec	rectangular
al	alcohol	hpl	heptane	red	red
alk	alkali	hng	heptane	rex	resinous
Am	J. Am. Chem. Soc.	ha	hexane	rh	rhombohedral
Am	amyl (pentyl)	hyd	hydrate	rhd	rhombohedral
amor	amorphous	hys	hygroscopic	s	soluble
an	anhydrous	i	insoluble	s	secondary
aq	aqueous	ign	ignite	sc	sc
as	asymmetric	in	inactive	sc	secondary
atm	atmosphere	inam	inflamable	st	stiffness
h	hollow	inf	infusible	sh	shoulder
H	Hallstein	irid	iridescent	slv	sliver
Her	Chem. Ber.	iso	isometric	sl	slightly (d)
hipym	hipyramidal	J	J. Chem. Soc.	so	solid
hl	black	JOC	J. Org. Chem.	sol	solution
hl	blue	L. I.	lavin	solv	solvent
hr	brown	la	large	sph	spheroidal
be	bright	lf	leaf	st	stable
Bu	butyl	lig	ligand	sub	sublimable
bz	benzene	liq	liquid	suc	supercooled
C	Chem. Abs.	lo	long	sulf	sulfuric acid
c	percentage concentration	li	light	sym	symmetrical
ca	about (circum)	m	molding	sy	symp
chl	chloroform	m	molar	ter	tertiary
en	columns	M	molar (concentration)	tbl	tablets
col	colorless	M	Merck Index, 7th Edition	tbl	tablets
con	concentrated	mol	molecular	ter	tertiary
cor	corrected	Ma	methoxy	Tet	Tetrahedron
cr	crystals	met	metallic	ter	tertiary
cy	cyclohexane	mic	microscopic	Tet	tetrahydron
d	decomposes	min	mineral	tol	toluene
u	line in the spectrum of sodium (subscript)	mod	modification	tr	transparent
D, d	dextro	mul	multigratory	trg	triangular
Δd	slight decomposition	n	normal chain, refractive index	undil	undiluted
dil	diluted	N	normal (concentration)	unsat	unsaturated
diox	dioxane	N	nitrogen	v	very
distb	distillable	nd	needles	vap	vapor
dk	dark	o	ortho	vap	vapor
Dr, dl	racemic	oct	octahedral	vic	vicinal
dlq	deliquescent	og	orange	vic	vicinal
DMP	dimethyl formamide	ood	ordinary organic solvents	volat	volatile or volatiles
E	Elsevier	or	or	vi	viscous
eff	effluence	ord	ordinary	w	water
Et	ethyl	org	organic	wh	white
eth	ether	orth	orthochromic	wr	warm
exp	explodes	ox	organic solvents	ws	waxy
extrap	extrapolated	p	para	ye	yellow
		pa	pale	xy	xylene

1 For I.U.C. rules of nomenclature see General Index.

2 Generally means ethyl alcohol.

3 The abbreviation of a color ending in "ish" is to be read as ending with the suffix "ish," (e.g., greenish means greenish).

4 D, L generally mean configuration and d, l generally mean optical rotation, but there are many examples in the chemical literature in which the meaning of these symbols is ambiguous and/or interchangeable.

5 Generally means dissolved ether.

6 N indicates a position in the molecule.

7 + and -, or + and -, are used as convenient.

C-76

Appendix 3
page 2